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You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

Please complete The Friends & Family Test to tell us about your experience at: www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily or download our App from the Apple App store or Google Play Store.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk if you would like a reference list.

Author: Nicola Beavan
Role: Outreach Nurse
Date written: October 2011
Last revised: September 2017
Review date: September 2020
Version: 1.2
Code: PI0814

Caring for your child after a burn or scald injury (page 1 of 7)

This leaflet is designed as a guide to help you care for your child at home. This leaflet should be read with the other leaflets you have been given.

Infection

A wound infection needs prompt treatment. It is important to be aware of the signs of infection which are:

- high temperature
- skin rash
- vomiting and/or diarrhoea
- redness and/ or any swelling
- increased pain
- discharge from the wound.

If you notice any of these signs please contact sarum ward on 01722 336262 ext. 2561 or 2560. If your child is very unwell consider getting your child to medical help urgently.

Dressings

Your child's dressing will protect the wound whilst healing takes place. To reduce the risk of infection, try to keep the dressing clean and dry. It is important that the dressings are changed if wound fluid has leaked through the dressing, or if the dressing is:

- wet or very dirty
- loose or falling off
- smelling offensive.

If any of these occur please contact Sarum ward (numbers at the end of this leaflet).

Your child's continued care will be discussed with you before you go home. You will be given a small supply of dressings and a letter to take with you.

The dressings may need to be changed every 2-3 days, but be guided by your nurse about your child's individual needs.

Keep any open wounds covered to prevent infection.

**Sarum Ward 01722 336262
ext 2561 or 2560**

Dressing changes

Your child's dressing changes will be arranged before leaving the ward or out-patients department. We will do our best to arrange this as near to your home as possible, this may be at your local surgery with the practice nurse, community children's nurse, Paediatric Burn Outreach nurse, or in the Paediatric Dressings Clinic on Sarum ward. If your child's wound hasn't healed within 2 weeks, an appointment will be made to return to see the doctors at Salisbury Hospital.

The Burns Clinics are held in the Paediatric Dressings Clinic on Monday mornings, Wednesday afternoons, Thursday afternoons, Friday mornings and Saturday mornings and this is where you may bring your child for change of dressings and to see the doctor. It may be helpful to bring something with you to occupy your child while you wait, and perhaps a snack or a drink. Please give your child some pain relieving medicine (see below) before your child's dressing change. This may help to relieve any discomfort he/she may feel.

If you are unable to keep your appointment, if you have an urgent problem or if your child is unwell following a burn injury please contact the burns unit.

Skin grafts and donor sites

Grafting of the wounds may be required if the burn or scald wound is deep and will not heal by itself. You will have discussed this with your doctor and signed the consent for the grafting to be done. Please see separate leaflet for further information.

If you need to take your child to your GP or local hospital for a dressing change, please take this leaflet and any others with you for their information.

Diet

To help your child's wound to heal, encourage your child to drink plenty and to eat foods that contain a lot of protein, for example – milk, yoghurts, cheese, eggs, fish, meat and baked beans.

Pain and itching

If your child seems to be in pain, you can give pain killers such as paracetamol (Calpol); you can also give Ibuprofen (Nurofen or Calprofen). Please follow the instructions on the bottle/packet carefully according to your child's age. If this does not help and your child is still in pain, please contact the burns unit for advice.

Itching can be a major problem for some children. Regular creaming and massage helps. Wearing loose clothes made from natural materials can also help. If your child will not settle and itching becomes a problem please speak to the doctor or nurse at the hospital. There are medicines that can help, for example piriton which can be bought over the counter at your local pharmacy.

Hygiene

- when your child is discharged home, they may not be allowed to have a bath or shower. You will be told when your child can have a bath or shower.
- once healed and no longer needing any dressings, you should cleanse your child's skin daily, with a bath or shower.
- your child's skin may be more sensitive to temperature or can be numb in places. Always test the water temperature before showering or bathing.
- use non-perfumed soap and cleansing products to prevent irritation.

Creaming

Healed wounds, skin grafts, donor sites and scars all require regular creaming to prevent the area from drying, cracking and becoming sore. This is because newly healed skin is unable to lubricate itself in the same way as undamaged skin.

- at first, creams should be applied gently but gradually progress to massaging the area
- creaming should be carried out 2-3 times per day. Occasionally, this may be needed more often if your child's skin is particularly dry.
- it is very important that the skin is cleansed each day as the build-up of cream can cause skin irritation.
- massage involves firm pressure in circular strokes over the scars.
- any non-perfumed cream can be used (e.g. MyTrusty Sunflower cream, Aveeno cream, Epiderm cream or any that you normally use at home).

Managing scarring

Following a burn injury some form of scarring is likely, although its severity can be determined by many different factors, these will be discussed with you by the burn team. When a burn heals, there is a risk of developing hypertrophic scars. These are scars that are red, raised, hard, sometimes sensitive and often itchy. Once fully healed, treatment for scarring can begin. Your child will be referred to the Scar Management Team if required.

Treatments commonly used include:

- creaming and massage
- silicone creams
- silicone dressings
- pressure garments (made-to-measure Lycra garments which are worn 23 hours a day)
- face masks (solid, clear plastic pressure mask).

Scarring can take up to 2 years to fully settle and some people will need treatment for this length of time. If you or your child are worried about scarring and have not been referred to the service, please ask your doctor or nurse to do so. Scar management appointments are every Wednesday at Salisbury District Hospital.

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Changes in skin colour

You may notice a change in the colour of the child's wound at certain times. If they get hot, angry or upset it may become redder and if they become cold it may become more bluish in colour. This is all normal, and not something to worry about. It happens as a result of the damage caused to the pigmentation of the skin. It will settle in time.

Sun screen advice

It is very important that both the healed wounds are protected from the sun as it is new thinner skin without the normal skin protection. It is very important that your child uses high factor sun protection cream (for both UVA and UVB) and wears protective clothing over the areas, as the new skin will burn very quickly and blister. It is important to protect all newly healed areas from sun damage for at least 2 years. After this period you should continue to use sun protection creams as normally recommended to prevent your skin burning.

Blisters and small wounds

Newly healed skin is a lot thinner and more sensitive than normal skin. As a result of this the development of small wound breakdown and blisters is not uncommon in the first few months of healing. This may occur due to irritation from clothing, or accidental bumps and bruises. If this should occur the child can go to the School Nurse or GP. Wounds should be covered with a non-adhesive dressing to prevent any further damage and allow healing. If you have any problems regarding a wound, you can always phone the Outreach nurse or burns unit for advice (numbers at end of leaflet).

Exercise and Swimming

Scar tissue has a tendency to tighten and contract, especially around joints. Whilst your child was in hospital the physiotherapist may have regularly performed stretching exercises to prevent this. Physical exercise is now extremely important to maintain the range of movements of the joints after discharge. Swimming is an excellent form of exercise and can be allowed as soon as all the wounds are fully healed. If your child has pressure garments, these can be removed for swimming. Your child must shower properly after leaving the pool, as chlorine can dry the skin and make any itching worse. Moisturising cream should be put on after showering, and, if they have them, before putting on dry pressure garments. Generally, contact sports should be avoided until all the wounds are healed and your child has started to wear pressure garments. Please ask the burn team about this.

Social Support

When you first go home from hospital, your child might have difficulty carrying out some of their everyday activities. In many cases, family and friends support you and your child until they regain their normal level of independence. Your child's health visitor or school nurse should have been contacted to tell them of your child's admission to hospital. Please contact them when you return home if you need extra support. Please ask your nurse if you have any concerns about managing at home, they may be able to help.

Sarum Ward 01722 336262
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Burns follow-up appointments

When you leave hospital, and after your child's burn has healed you may be given an appointment to come back to Salisbury to see the doctor. Your child may be seen at the hospital for several years after the injury.

Handy hints

- once at home, remember to give pain killers to your child before having a dressing change or going to physiotherapy
- eating a healthy balanced diet will help to promote healing
- smoking can effect healing. Even passive smoking can have an effect on the healing
- when you first go home your child may be more tired and lacking stamina, so plan regular rest periods into their day
- to prevent long-term stiffness, keep the injured area moving.

Paediatric Burn Outreach Team

What we do:

- give support and education to burn injured children and their families across the Southwest network
- give support and education to professionals providing a service to children who have a burn injury, from acute injury through to rehabilitation across the Southwest network

What the service can offer patients

- provide a link and support between the hospitals and the community services, including schools and nurseries.
- regular follow-up appointments. This may be with the outreach nurse or the hospital team
- specialist burn wound care and advice
- specialist burn scar assessment and management
- specialist burn physiotherapy support if required
- psychological support and referral to specialist services if required.

Who can be referred to the service?

- any child that has been cared for in the burns unit at Salisbury Hospital
- any child that has previously had a burn injury and lives in the Southwest Network area. A referral letter (from your GP) will be needed to the burn service at Salisbury Hospital.

Sarum Ward 01722 336262
ext 2561 or 2560

How to contact the outreach nurse

The outreach nurse can be contacted on any Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm on Tel: 07713 083239 (messages can be left at any time and will be answered as soon as possible).

What does a Clinical Psychologist do?

Clinical psychologists are trained in child development, how children think and learn, and how children and families cope with difficulties. The clinical psychologist will talk to you about any worries, fears or your experiences. They can work with you and your family to try and help you find ways of coping, as well as helpful ways forward. They also work closely with nurseries, school, colleges and any other professionals involved with the family.

Working with a clinical psychologist

Burn injuries may be very distressing to children and their families, and sometimes it can be difficult to cope either when on the ward or when at home. At these times it may be helpful to talk to someone like a clinical psychologist.

A child may be seen because of:

- experiencing distressing memories of the injury
- difficulties in adjusting to the effects of the burn
- worries about scarring and appearance
- distressing or upsetting treatment
- difficulties in coping with changes in appearance
- worries about going back to school.

Similarly, parents/carers may have worries about:

- their child's health, future, development and school
- relationships with other children
- problems with the child's behaviour
- feelings of guilt or responsibility about what has happened
- the impact of the injury of the relationships within the family.

What help may the clinical psychologist offer?

This will depend on the children and their families. It may involve talking to the family as a whole or working with the children or parents on their own as many times as is needed.

How can I be referred to see a clinical psychologist?

You can ask to be referred by any member of the burns team or any other health professional such as your GP. Just let them know and they will contact the psychologist for you on the telephone number at the end of the leaflet. Please also ring if you would like to discuss any concerns. If they are not in the office please leave a message and they will get back to you as soon as possible.

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What about confidentiality?

What you say will be confidential unless we are concerned for the safety of yourself or others. We will let others involved in your care know that you are working with us, and we may, at times share information to help us to provide the best service we can. We would try and discuss that with you first.

Useful telephone numbers

Sarum ward: 01722 336262 ext. 2560 Or 2561

The Paediatric Burns Outreach Nurse: 07713083239

Clinical Psychology: 01722 425105

Physiotherapy: 01722 336262 bleep 1284

Occupational Therapy: 01722 336262 ext 1432

Scar Management Team (through the Burns Unit): 01722 345530

BUGS (Burns Unit Group Support) 01722 345507

Useful websites

Changing faces

www.changingfaces.org.uk

Katie Piper Foundation

www.katiepiperfoundation.org.uk

Dans's Fund for Burns

www.dansfundforburns.org

TalkHealth

www.talkhealthpartnership.com

This leaflet is based on one written by North Bristol NHS Trust.